Teaching Ethics in Scholastic Journalism:

Additional Lesson Plans

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Title: The Democratic Function of Journalism

Overview and Rationale:

“Every generation creates its own journalism. But the purpose and the underlying elements of journalism, we have found, are the same... The central purpose of journalism is to tell the truth so that people will have the information that they need to be sovereign.” ~ From “The Elements of Journalism”

In order for journalism students to fully understand their purpose on a publication staff, they must first understand the over-arching purpose of journalism as a whole. This lesson plan is geared towards journalism students in an introduction class. It teaches the students the role and purpose of journalism in a democratic society.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will be able to discuss the role and purpose of journalism in society.
- Students will be able to apply this knowledge to their role on the high school publication staff.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- Why do journalists do what they do? What is the underlying purpose of journalism?
- What role do the media play in society? In a democratic society?
- What role does a school publication play in the school community?
- Key term – watchdog media

Overview and Timeline (one class period):

Anticipatory set/Lead in (15 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Have students respond to the following quote and prompt:

Thomas Jefferson once said, “If I had to choose between government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

What did he mean by this? What do you think he is saying about the media’s role in American society?
- Discuss the students’ reactions to the quote in a whole-class discussion and brainstorm what students consider to be the role of journalism in society. Have students define “watchdog media.”

**Step-By-Step Procedures (15 min.):**

1.) **Group work** – Students should now be thinking about how journalism relates to government and government actions. Now, students will work in small groups to brainstorm what they consider the PURPOSE of journalism…they should list their ideas on bulletin board paper and then tape it to the board when finished. Encourage students to brainstorm the purpose of national, state, local, and school media outlets.

2.) **Class discussion** – Discuss what the students came up with in their group work

**Assessment (15 min.):**

**EXIT SLIP** – Have students respond to the following questions:

- Using what you learned today, explain what you think should be done in the following situations...

1.) A columnist for *The New York Times* is furious about the recent increase in federal taxes. She decides to write a column about it for the next issue of the paper, where she questions the actions of government officials. These officials are not happy about the negative publicity. – Should she publish it?

2.) A columnist for *the hurricane*, a high school publication, is furious about the recent increase in the cost of parking passes. He decides to write a column about it for the next issue of the paper, where he questions the actions of the principal AND the assistant principal. The principal isn’t happy when he finds out the column is being written. – Should he publish it?

*OPTIONAL NEXT STEP – use this exit slip response as a discussion starter for tomorrow’s lesson

**Materials & Resources used:**

- “The Elements of Journalism” by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel
- Bulletin board paper & markers
Title: Using the Bok Model to Make Ethical Decisions

Overview and Rationale:

Every journalist is eventually faced with the question – should we print it? Most often, the answer to this question is not a clear yes or no (right vs. wrong answer), but rather journalists are most often faced with what Rushworth Kidder calls, “right vs. right” decisions. This concept speaks to the complexity of media decision making.

So, with the complexities of the decisions that need to be made, how do high school journalists decide what to print? This lesson will help teach students an ethical decision making model they can apply when making their next difficult ethical decision.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will be able to define and describe the steps of Bok’s ethical decision-making model.
- Students will be able to use this model to make ethical decisions regarding their publication.

Essential Questions:

- How do journalists decide what to publish?
- What are the steps to making an ethical decision?

Overview and Timeline (2-3 forty-five minute class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

Day 1

Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

5 min. – Students will brainstorm the methods they currently use when making a difficult decision.

5 min. – Students will discuss, as a class, the methods they use to make decisions. What trends do students notice? (use this to lead in to Bok’s model of decision making, i.e. – asking others for their opinion of what we should do)
Lecture (10 min.)

- Using pages 1-6 in “Media Ethics: Issues & Cases” (see resources used) explain the steps of Bok’s model for making ethical decisions. Have students take notes on the different steps of the process.

Power Point Group Project (25 min.)

- Break students in to groups of 3

- Discuss the “Ethical Decision Making Power Point” project assignment sheet (attached)

- Assign each group a different ethical scenario to analyze

Day 2

Review (10 min.)

- Discuss yesterday’s concepts with the class, focusing on the three steps to Bok’s decision making model

Power Point Group Project (35 min.)

- Students continue to work in groups on the Power Point assignment

Day 3

Power Point Presentations (10 min.)

- Students will present their Power Point projects over their ethical scenario and describe to the class why they came to the decision they did

Assessment:

- Power Point Presentations

- OPTIONAL – Ethics Scenario essay
Materials & Resources used:

- “Media Ethics: Issues & Cases” by: Phillip Patterson & Lee Wilkins
- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Power Point assignment sheet
- List of ethical scenarios
Title: Creating a Code of Ethics

Overview and Rationale:

“That kind of ‘core values’ that many codes of ethics embody, then, are the ones that are intrinsically worthwhile…’What is right?’ That task typically falls to a code of ethics.” ~ From “How Good People Make Tough Choices”

In scholastic media, it’s important for students to be able to make the “right” choices when it comes to ethical decision-making. But how do they know what the “right” choice is? Developing a code of ethics for publication staffs can help students make those decisions. A code of ethics can serve as a guideline for what the staff has previously decided is the “right” thing to do and can help ease uncertainty when it comes to ethical decision-making.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will be able to define and discuss the concept of ethical codes and what role they play in decision-making.
- Students will create a code of ethics for the publication staff.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is the “right” thing for journalists to do? Why?
- How can an established code of ethics help make ethical decisions?
- Key term – codes of ethics, core value, morals vs. ethics

Overview and Timeline (two 45 min. class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY ONE

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Have students respond to the following prompt:

What is a moral? What is an ethic? Explain the similarities and differences in a brief list, Venn diagram, or paragraph.
- Discuss the students’ responses and help clarify for them the differences between an ethic and a moral.

2.) Article reading – Have students read the Business Week article, “Corporate Ethics: Right Makes Might” and highlight the main points of the article.

http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/apr2002/nf20020411_6350.htm

3.) Class discussion – Discuss what the students highlighted and the actions of J&J, who makes Tylenol, versus the actions of Enron executives. What was the end result for both companies? Both companies had a code of ethics in place, so why were the results so drastically different? (also read pages 81-82 in How Good People Make Tough Choices for further insight on the Tylenol scenario).

4.) EXIT SLIP – how can a code of ethics help publication staffs?

Homework – Research 3 different codes of ethics for different companies and organizations (Boy scouts, big businesses, etc.). Research 3 codes of ethics for publications (New York Times, etc.). Create a list of what they all have in common…what are their “core values”?

DAY TWO

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Have students discuss their homework assignment in groups and list what all the codes of ethics have in common on a sheet of bulletin board paper.

2.) Class discussion – Tape bulletin board lists on front board and discuss as a class what codes of ethics should include. Have students read and discuss the NSPA Model Code of Ethics for high school journalists.

3.) Brainstorm a Code of Ethics – Have the whole class brainstorm and discuss what should be included in the staff Code of Ethics.

4.) EXIT SLIP – From the brainstorming session, list the 3 top things you believe should be included in the Code of Ethics and explain why you believe they are the most important to include.

Homework – Finish exit slip if not completed in class

Assessment:

- Entrance Slip – Day 1
- Exit Slips – Days 1 & 2
• Day 1 homework
• Final publication staff Code of Ethics

**Materials & Resources used:**

• “How Good People Make Tough Choices” by Rushworth Kidder
• Copies of the article “Corporate Ethics: Right Makes Might” (class set)
• Copies of the NSPA “Model Code of Ethics” (class set)
• Bulletin board paper and markers
Title: The story of Stephen Glass and the ethical need for verification and fact checking

Overview and Rationale:

The importance of a fact checking system for high school publications cannot be understated. This, the training ground for young, inexperienced reporters, should be the place where the process of fact verification and accuracy checks are taught and established.

The importance of credibility in reporting should be taught at the high school level, because there is very often no room for this education to take place in the “real world” of journalism where reporters and editors alike are on constant deadlines. Advisers never really know...the next Stephen Glass could be sitting in their introduction to journalism class.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will define fabrication and discuss its ethical impact on journalism.
- Students will explain the importance of verifying facts before publication.
- Students will create a system of fact checking for their publication.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is fabrication?
- What leads journalists to “fabricate” stories or images? What environment is needed in order to prevent that fabrication?
- What steps can publication staffs take to verify quote and fact accuracy?
- Key term – fabrication, fact check, credibility

Overview and Timeline (five 45 min. class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY ONE

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Have students respond to the following prompt:
What does it mean to “fabricate” something? Do you think the media ever fabricates stories? What possible consequences could fabrication have on media outlets? Explain.

- Discuss the students’ responses.

2.) Article reading (make copies of the article so students can make marks on it) –

15 min. – Have students read the original “Hack Heaven” article below. Have them highlight any “red flags” they may see. What pieces of the article might make them, as an editor, verify the facts of the article.

http://ebookbrowse.com/artikel-hack-heaven-doc-d36947053

3.) VIDEO – Start watching “Shattered Glass”

**DAY TWO & THREE**

1.) VIDEO – Finish watching “Shattered Glass”

**Homework** – Read the Vanity Fair article, “Shattered Glass,” highlighting interesting aspects of the article.


**DAY FOUR**

1.) **ENTRANCE SLIP** –

Using the movie and the Vanity Fair reading homework as a guide, discuss with a partner why you think Glass fabricated stories for The New Republic. Together, create a bulleted list of reasons why you both believe the fabrication happened.

**Homework** – Read the Vanity Fair article, “Shattered Glass,” highlighting interesting aspects of the article.

- Discuss the students’ responses.

2.) Now, with your partner, read the Forbes.com article, “Lies, damn lies and fiction” and highlight the main points of the article. Create a list of the steps Forbes took to expose Glass and The New Republic of the fabrication.


- Discuss the students’ responses.
**Homework** – Brainstorm a list of 5-10 things we can do as a staff to check facts and prevent fabrication from being published in our newspaper.

**DAY FIVE**

1.) **ENTRANCE ACTIVITIES** -

With a partner, discuss your brainstorming homework from last night. What are your best ideas for checking facts and preventing fabrication?

2.) Class discussion – As a whole class, discuss and create a “formal” system for checking facts, sources, etc. before publication.

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip – Day 1, 4, & 5
- Discussion participation (Day 1, 4, & 5)
- Formal system for checking facts

**Materials & Resources used:**

- “Shattered Glass” movie
- Copies of the article “Hack Heaven” (class set)
- Copies of the article “Shattered Glass” (class set)
- Copies of the article “Lies, damn lies and fiction” (class set)
Title: The “thought experiment” and scholastic media

Overview and Rationale:

“So when Howard’s students took up this line, he would engage them in a little thought experiment. Imagine, he told them, that I’m going to parachute you into a country somewhere in the world, and you haven’t any idea where it is. As soon as you get out of your parachute, I want you to walk up to the first person you see, take away whatever he or she is holding, and run away with it. Then see what happens. With the possible exception, he explains, that you have landed in front of a Buddhist monk and taken away his begging bowl – and that his only response is to sigh, “Ah! That’s karma!” – you will have run squarely into the universal concept of property rights, codified in the Western world through the commandment “Don’t steal”...And you will find it in any culture in which you land” (Kidder 87).

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will define and discuss moral values in journalism.
- Students will examine these values and how they relate to scholastic journalism.
- Students will create a list of journalistic “commandments.”

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What are the “universal moral values” in journalism?
- Why do journalists and society value these morals?
- Key term – universal moral values, plagiarism, fabrication

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY ONE

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Have students respond to the following prompt:

Do you think “universal moral values” exist? If so, what are some universal moral values you can think of? Explain your response.
- Discuss the students’ responses in a whole class discussion.

2.) Thought Experiment – Have students engage in Howard’s “thought experiment” and discuss how it applies to universal moral values.

“So when Howard’s students took up this line, he would engage them in a little thought experiment. Imagine, he told them, that I’m going to parachute you into a country somewhere in the world, and you haven’t any idea where it is. As soon as you get out of your parachute, I want you to walk up to the first person you see, take away whatever he or she is holding, and run away with it. Then see what happens. With the possible exception, he explains, that you have landed in front of a Buddhist monk and taken away his begging bowl – and that his only response is to sigh, “Ah! That’s karma!” – you will have run squarely into the universal concept of property rights, codified in the Western world through the commandment “Don’t steal”...And you will find it in any culture in which you land” (Kidder 87).

3.) Discussion – Now, with a partner, discuss what universal journalistic moral values could look like. List 3-5 universal journalistic moral values.

- Discuss the students’ responses in a whole class discussion. As a class, come up with a list of journalistic “commandments” to hang in the newsroom.

Assessment:

- Entrance slip
- List of journalistic “commandments”

Materials & Resources used:

- “How Good People Make Tough Choices” by Rushworth Kidder
Title: Introduction to Ethical Decision Making

Overview and Rationale:

Journalism students need to understand the fundamental concepts of ethical decision making before they can control content decisions for any publication.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will learn the key points in the ethical decision-making process and how to apply the process to their own editorial decisions.

Essential Questions:

- What is my journalistic purpose?
- What are possible ethical concerns?
- Can the article cause harm?
- What are my alternatives to maximize my responsibility to tell the truth and minimize harm?
- Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision?

Overview and Timeline:

Activity 1 (Two or Three 45-minute classes)

Anticipatory set/Lead in (20 min.) – Pre-test – Have students answer the questions on one side of the handout (without looking at the back) then have students answer the back side of the handout. Discuss the results of the pre-test using the following questions as a guide:

1.) How did your answers change the second time you responded to the questions?
2.) What made answering the questions the second time more difficult?
3.) How do you think this relates to ethical decision-making in journalism?

Step-By-Step Procedures:
1.) Students should work their way through the NewsU.org course titled “Introduction to Ethical Decision-Making”

2.) They should take notes as they read and work their way through the course, paying close attention to the 10 questions for ethical-decision making.

Activity 2 (One 45-minute class)

1.) Read the SPJ Code of Ethics and discuss as a class

2.) In small groups, students should discuss the SPJ Code of Ethics and come up with three ways high school journalists could follow each of the four ethical codes (Seek Truth and Report It, Minimize Harm, Act Independently, Be Accountable).

This activity could lead in to a development of a staff code of ethics with specifics for the school publication.

Assessment:

Using a list of ethical situations, students will choose one ethical scenario to analyze (see rubric for assignment details).

Materials & Resources used:

- Handout # 1 – Ethical decision making pre-test and discussion
- Newsu.org – “Introduction to Ethical Decision-Making” course
- SPJ Code of Ethics (http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp)
- Assignment #1 grading rubric
Handout #1 – Ethical Decision-Making Pre-test

FRONT:

Answer the True or False questions below.

1.) I would never lie. __________

2.) I would never steal. _________

3.) I would never cheat. _________

4.) I would never kill someone. __________

BACK:

Answer the True or False questions below.

1.) I would lie if it meant protecting someone I loved. __________

2.) I would steal food if my family were starving. _________

3.) I would cheat on an exam if meant the difference between passing and failing the class. _________

4.) I would kill someone out of self-protection or to protect the ones I love. __________
## Assignment #1 Grading Rubric

### Ethical Scenario Analysis

**Project Description:** Students will write a 1-2 page paper on an ethical situation of their choice (choose from the list provided). Using the knowledge gained from the class discussions and NewsU.org course, students will write on how to respond to the ethical situation, using the Poynter Institutes List of 10 questions as a guide for their response. Students should work their way through all ten ethical questions before making a final ethical decision. *Use MLA style.

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<th>Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paper is at least 1-2 pages in length</td>
<td>______ / 20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper thoroughly explains how to handle the ethical situation</td>
<td>______ / 25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper addresses all 10 decision-making questions on the Poynter List</td>
<td>______ / 20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper is relatively free of grammar and spelling errors</td>
<td>______ / 10 points</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>______ / 75 points</td>
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COMMENTS:
Title: Ethical decision making in action

Overview and Rationale:

High school publication staffs are constantly forced to make tough decisions on a deadline. The more students practice how to make these decisions quickly, the better they will be able to do it in “real life.” Ethical fitness is crucial to young journalists who are faced with making these types of decisions for perhaps the first time.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will discuss ethical decision making in terms of photos.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- Is it ok to publish photos of dead bodies?
- What about violence in general? Is it ok to print photos of severely injured people?
- Key term – visual ethics, credibility

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) **Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –**

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will view the photo of the Boston shooting and then respond to the following prompt:

Would you print this photo in our school publication? Why or why not? Explain.

- Discuss the students’ responses.

2.) **Group work/discussions (examining different ethical approaches) –**

*Break class in to four groups. Each group will discuss the photo of the Boston shooting and whether or not to publish it, using the different ethical-decision making theories below...
Group #1 – Aristotle’s Golden Mean

- Follow the guidelines of Aristotle’s Golden Mean (given in class by lecture)
- Work your way through the process of making an ethical decision based on his philosophy

Group #2 – Bok’s Model

- Follow the guidelines of Bok’s Model (given in class by lecture)
- Work your way through the process of making an ethical decision based on the philosophy

Group #3 – Kant’s Categorical Imperative

- Follow the guidelines of Kant’s Categorical Imperative (given in class by lecture)
- Work your way through the process of making an ethical decision based on the philosophy

Group #4 – Poynter’s “10 Questions to Make Good Ethical Decisions”

- Follow the guidelines/questions of Poynter’s “10 Questions to Make Good Ethical Decisions” (given in class by lecture/handout)
- Work your way through the process of making an ethical decision based on the 10 questions

In-Class Discussion – Discuss the results of the group discussions – following each theory, should the photo print? Now...should we print the photo? Why or why not? Explain and discuss.

Assessment:

- Entrance Slip
- Discussion participation

Materials & Resources used:

- Projector/overhead to project Boston shooting photo
- Materials and lecture notes on all four ethical theories
Title: Keeping up with the changing media

Overview and Rationale:

"The new journalist is no longer deciding what the public should know – this was the classic role of the gatekeeper. He or she is helping audiences make order out of it. This does not mean simply adding interpretation or analysis to news reporting. The first task of the new journalist/sense maker, rather, is to verify what information is reliable and then order it so people can grasp it efficiently" (The Elements of Journalism).

With an increase in citizen journalism due to changes in information technology, the role of the journalist is changing. Journalist's used to focus on breaking news coverage. Now, thanks to blogs and social media, breaking news is making it in to the hands of the audience before professional news outlets even have a chance to get it to the copy desk. Thus, the new task for professional journalists becomes taking information that has already "broken" to the public, and make it mean something to them. This happens through synthesizing and verifying information.

It is the duty of scholastic media advisers to focus on this shift (much in the same manner that an emphasis was placed on media convergence years ago). Advisers must prepare their students for the 21st century newsroom – one that is rapidly changing. In order to prepare these journalists, advisers need to focus on teaching their students to verify and synthesize information in news articles.

Goals for Understanding:

• Students will analyze different media outlets and discuss the “type” of news they publish (breaking news, synthesizing news, or verifying news).
• Students will compare and contrast tradition “breaking news” to emerging “synthesizing and verifying” news.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

• How is information technology changing media?
• What are journalists doing to keep up with these changes?
• What should high school journalists know about keeping up in the “new” world of journalism?
• Key term – breaking news, synthesizing news, verifying news
Overview and Timeline (two 45 min. class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY 1

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

How has social media (blogs, Facebook, Twitter) changed the media? Explain.

- Discuss the student responses.

2.) Brief lecture (10 min.) –

- Define and discuss key terms (breaking news, synthesizing news, and verifying news)
- Discuss how the role of the journalist is changing

3.) Comparing and Contrasting the Changing Media (25 min.) –

- Complete the Comparing and Contrasting Changing Media Venn Diagram
- Discuss the main differences between breaking news and synthesizing/verifying news

Assessment:

- Entrance Slip
- Comparing and Contrasting the Changing Media Venn Diagram

DAY 2

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

In our publication, do we “break” news, “synthesize” news, or “verify” news? Explain.

- Discuss the student responses.
- Should we focus more on synthesizing/verifying? How can we focus more on those?

2.) Comparing Media Chart activity (25 min.) –
• Complete the chart by examining different publications and analyzing the “type” of news that is portrayed

3.) **Comparing Media Chart activity (10 min.) –**

• Brainstorm story ideas for the next publication. Come up with ways to break the story, synthesize it, and verify it.
• Finish a brainstorming list for homework

**Assessment:**

• Entrance Slip
• Comparing Media Chart activity
• Brainstorming session

**Materials & Resources used:**

• The Changing Media packet/handout
• Multiple publication to examine and analyze (both online and in print)
Title: The Circle of Intimacy & Veil of Ignorance

(From “Media Ethics” book p. 153, 158)

Overview and Rationale:

The right to privacy and the discretion of information – these are two concepts that can sometimes elude journalists. However, by carefully examining the “Circle of Intimacy” and the “Veil of Ignorance,” young journalists can begin to view their sources as more than just sources. They can begin to take into account their source’s right to privacy and discretion. By examining these theories, young journalists can make better decisions as to what to publish and what not to publish.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will define, discuss and analyze the “Circle of Intimacy” and the “Veil of Ignorance.”
- Students will make ethical decisions keeping both theories in mind (applying both theories).

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is private information?
- Can journalists ever publish what is considered “private”? 
- What should high school journalists know about keeping up in the “new” world of journalism?
- Key terms – The Veil of Ignorance, The Circle of Intimacy, invasion of privacy

Overview and Timeline (three 45 min. class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY 1 – “The Circle of Intimacy”

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

What is considered “private” information? Can reporters ever print private information? If so, when is it allowable?
- Discuss the student responses.

2.) **Brief lecture (10 min.)** -

- Define and discuss key terms (invasion of privacy and The Circle of Intimacy)
- Discuss how these terms impact decisions journalists make

3.) **“Our Circle of Intimacy” activity (15 min.)** -

- Have students draw a Circle of Intimacy on a piece of paper (use p. 154 in *Media Ethics* as a guide) and label it with who would be in their circles
- Then, have students decide what type of information they would be comfortable sharing in each circle.
- Discuss their results (be sure to tie this in to what they revel on Facebook and other social media sites)

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- “Our Circle of Intimacy” activity

**DAY 2 – “The Veil of Ignorance”**

1.) **Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.)** -

**ENTRANCE SLIP** – Students will respond to the following prompt:

Do you think journalists can make ethical decisions free from their own biases and points of view? Explain.

- Discuss the student responses.
- How can journalists keep their bias from impacting their ethical decisions?

2.) **Brief lecture (10 min.)** -

- Define and discuss key term (The Veil of Ignorance)
- Discuss how this term impacts decisions journalists make

3.) **“Looking through the Veil of Ignorance” activity (25 min.)** -

- Have students think of an argument in which they completely disagree with (they can consider controversial topics like abortion, gay marriage, and others) and in a bulleted list write down reasons why they completely disagree with that argument
- Now, in another bulleted list, have students write down why someone might agree with that argument
- Last, students will write a 300 word column on the side of the argument opposite of their original viewpoint
- Discuss why this is difficult, how to be successful writing it and how this could relate to the decisions made as journalists

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Column on alternate viewpoint

**DAY 3 – “Ethical Decision-Making using the Circle and the Veil”**

1.) **Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.)** -

**ENTRANCE SLIP** – Students will respond to the following prompt:

(Use a recent news topic as a lead in writing prompt...have students examine the issue using what they learned previously on the Circle of Intimacy and the Veil of Ignorance)

- Discuss the student responses.
- How can journalists keep their bias from impacting their ethical decisions?

2.) **Practice Ethical Decision-Making (30 min.)** -

- Set up two stations. One station will examine an ethical scenario using the Circle of Intimacy concept and one station will examine the same ethical scenario using the Veil of Ignorance concept.
- Present an ethical scenario (one that deals with privacy issues)
- Students split into two groups and discuss the scenario in each station (above).
- Then, come together as a whole class and discuss the final decisions made in each group.

**Materials & Resources used:**

- Lecture notes on (The Circle of Intimacy and The Veil of Ignorance)
- Ethical scenarios (A list of scenarios to use...  
  [http://journalism.indiana.edu/resources/ethics/](http://journalism.indiana.edu/resources/ethics/))
Title: “A Culture of Honesty” and what it means for high school journalism

Overview and Rationale:

“It’s credibility, more than objectivity, that’s important for us in our industry...There has to be a culture in newsrooms that allows a journalist to have a free and open discussion” (Elements 237).

Do high school media publications have that culture? Is free and open expression, a diversity of ideas even, openly accepted on a high school newspaper staff? Are high school publications diverse in both their staff members and in their coverage?

High school journalists, like professional journalists, need to ensure that a “culture of honesty” exists. By doing this, publications can increase the diversity of their coverage. It is important that publications have not only diverse people, but diverse ideas as well.

“The goal of diversity should be to assemble not only a newsroom that might resemble the community but also one that is open and honest so that this diversity can function...It is what we call intellectual diversity, and it encompasses and gives meaning to all the other kinds” (Elements 240).

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will define and describe a “Culture of Honesty” and discuss its ethical implications in journalism.
- Students will explain the importance of diversity in journalism.
- Students will create a list of stories from a diverse perspective, as well as a list of ways they can continuously incorporate diversity in the publication.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is a “Culture of Honesty”? What does it mean for high school publications?
- How can newsrooms incorporate not just diversity, but diversity of intellect?
- Key term – “Culture of Honesty,” diversity of intellect, credibility
**Overview and Timeline** *(one 45 min. class period):*

**Step-By-Step Procedures:**

1.) *Anticipatory set/Lead in (5 min.) –*

**ENTRANCE SLIP** – Have students respond to the following prompt:

Do you think our staff is diverse? Do we represent a diverse set of ideas and coverage? Explain.

- Discuss the students’ responses.

2.) *Brief Lecture (10 min.) – Discuss...What is a “Culture of Honesty”? Why is it important in journalism? (use pages 237-239 in *Elements* as a guide)*

3.) *“Finding diverse ideas” activity (30 min.) –*

- Looking at the first three issues of the newspaper for the year, students should answer the questions below in a group of 3-5.
  - What types of stories do we often cover? Why?
  - What are some things (think types of students, activities, events, etc.) that are under-covered in our publication?
  - Why are they under-covered?
  - How can we incorporate those under-covered things in our publication and make them relevant to all?

- Discuss these responses as a class.

**Homework** – Brainstorm 3 or more ways our publication can continuously incorporate diversity in our coverage. Bring for discussion tomorrow.

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Discussion participation
- “Finding diverse ideas” activity

**Materials & Resources used:**

- *The Elements of Journalism* by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel
- Class brainstorming/maestro dry erase board (or bulletin board paper to brainstorm ideas on)
Overview and Rationale:

“The media have been called disloyal by more than one politician, often for not greater sin than fulfilling the watchdog role. Fulfilling this role puts the journalists, and their media outlets by extension, on trial in the court of public opinion...journalists have two central responsibilities that are distinct because of the role journalists play in modern society. First, they have a greater responsibility to tell the truth than members of most professions. Second, journalists also seem to carry a somewhat greater obligation to foster political activity than the average person" (Media Ethics 97-98).

This responsibility to telling the truth often calls for journalists to separate themselves from certain loyalties and focus on the truth, not the loyalty. With that in mind, it is vital for students to learn how to detach themselves from their loyalties and focus on their responsibility as a journalist.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will discuss and analyze the types of loyalties journalists face, and how those loyalties impact news coverage.
- Students will brainstorm and discuss loyalties they face as journalists as well as ways they can detach themselves from those loyalties for journalistic purposes.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is a loyalty? What types of loyalties do people face?
- What types of loyalties do journalists face?
- Why is it important for journalists to detach themselves from loyalties?
- Key terms – Loyalty, Journalistic Role

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) **Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.)** –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:
“What is loyalty? What, or who, are you loyal to? Explain”

- Discuss the student responses and ask them how loyalty can impact journalistic decisions.

2.) Brief lecture (10 min.) –
   ● Define and discuss key terms (loyalty and role of the journalist)

3.) “Defining Loyalties” activity (25 min.) –
   ● Create 4 stations with a piece of bulletin board paper at each station. Label the stations (the bulletin board paper) as...
     1.) Loyalties arising from a shared humanity
     2.) Loyalties arising from professional practice
     3.) Loyalties arising from employment (in this case, from being on staff)
     4.) Loyalties arising from the media’s role in public life
   ● Create 4 groups of students.
   ● Each group will spend 5 minutes at each station brainstorming possible loyalties in each category (and possible issues with those loyalties).
   ● The last five minutes, the whole class will discuss the results.

Homework - Students will brainstorm loyalties they think they face when it comes to reporting in their community. They will also come up with ways to “detach” themselves from those loyalties for accurate reporting.

Assessment:
   ● Entrance Slip
   ● “Defining Loyalties” activity
   ● Homework assignment

Materials & Resources used:
   ● Lecture notes on Loyalties (from Media Ethics book)
   ● Bulletin board paper and markers
Title: Using the nine checkpoint steps in ethical decision-making

Overview and Rationale:

“That does not mean, however, that there is no logical and sequential process for ethical decision-making. True, we may not be aware that a pattern exists, But that does not mean that there is no pattern...Developing real skill at...ethics requires that intelligence fuse with intuition, that the process be internalized, and that decisions be made quickly, and naturally” (How Good People Make Tough Choices 180).

Ethical fitness should be the goal of all journalists, but it is not merely an acquired skill. It takes conscience practice and discussion. It takes specific training in ethical decision-making so that journalists can “internalize” the decision-making process and so that sound ethical decisions can be made swiftly, under the pressure of deadlines.

This training can, and indeed should, begin at the high school level. More and more, ethical training is being woven into college courses and business training. Students need to be exposed to this process and learning the nine checkpoint steps from Kidder’s book is an excellent place to start that education.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will define and describe the “Nine Checkpoints for Ethical Decision-Making.”
- Students will apply the checkpoints to ethical scenarios and discuss the decision-making process.
- Students will apply the checkpoints to ethical decision-making during the production of the publication.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What are the nine checkpoints for ethical decision-making according to Kidder?
- How can these steps be applied to ethical decision-making?
- Key terms – right vs. wrong, right vs. right, trilemma, & resolution principles
Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (5 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Have students respond to the following prompt:

REVIEW: Briefly describe the three ethical decision-making principles we’ve discussed in class so far. (reminder – Utilitarian, Kantian, Golden Rule).

- Discuss the students’ responses (for the purpose of this assignment, have students now call these three principles the “Resolution Principles.”

2.) Group Jigsaw Activity/Presentations (20 min.) –

- Create nine groups of students.
- Give each group a book (How Good People Make Tough Choices) and assign them one of the nine ethical checkpoints from pages 178-184.
- Give each group a piece of bulletin board paper.
- Have them create a poster to teach the other groups the key concepts from their assigned ethical checkpoint.
- Have each group “report out” to the other members of the class.
- While each group reports, have students complete the “Nine Checkpoints for Ethical Decision-Making guided notes” handout.

3.) Practice Activity (20 min.) –

- Students will remain in groups.
- Give each group a different ethical scenario to work through.
- On the back of the guided notes, have students use the “Nine Checkpoints for Ethical Decision-Making checklist” to, as a group, work through their decision on the given scenario.
- Have students reach a final decision “by deadline” (or by the end of the class period).

Homework – Brainstorm a list of when these checkpoints should be used for making an ethical decision for our publication.

Assessment:

- Entrance Slip
- Group Jigsaw Activity
- Practice Activity
Materials & Resources used:

- Nine copies of *How Good People Make Tough Choices* by Rushworth Kidder
- Bulletin board paper and markers
- Practice ethical scenarios
- Class set of copies for “Nine Checkpoints for Ethical Decision-Making guided notes” & “Nine Checkpoints for Ethical Decision-Making checklist”
Title: Keeping it Relevant (from “Elements” book pages 197-205)

Overview and Rationale:

“Journalists must make the significant interesting and relevant... Understood this way, the best work – that which rises above its subject matter – pushes a story further toward the middle of that continuum than the audience would expect. It does so through superior reporting, thinking, narrative, or other treatment. It is the Hollywood profile that says something deeper about filmmaking; the investigative expose that also reveals the human condition; the treatment of demographic data that brings a neighborhood to life. This the journalist’s task is to find the way to make the significant interesting in each story and finding the mix of the serious and the less serious that offers an account of the day” (The Elements of Journalism 188-198).

So how do journalists balance the serious versus the light-hearted? What the audience wants versus what they need? This discussion gets to the core of journalism and journalistic principles. How do journalists decide what to cover? In The Elements of Journalism, the authors argue the key to this is to keep content both relevant and engaging.

But how is this done? How can journalists keep it both relevant and engaging? The lesson plan below offers suggestions for discussions newspaper staffs should have in order to do just that.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will analyze their audience and determine what they “need” versus what they “want.”
- Students will analyze the relevance of news and how to keep their audience engaged.
- Students will brainstorm ways to keep the news both relevant and engaging.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- Who is the audience and what do they need to know?
- What are the essential elements of the story?
- How can the story be written to keep the audience engaged?
- Key terms – relevance, significance, engagement, storytelling techniques
Overview and Timeline (two 45 min. class periods):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY 1 – Relevance and Significance

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

What types of stories keep you interested? What are they about/what do they cover? Explain.

- Discuss the student responses.

2.) Brief lecture (10 min.) –

- Define and discuss key terms (relevance, significance, engagement,)
- Discuss how these concepts impact content decisions

3.) Analyzing the Purpose activity (25 min.) –

- Complete the Analyzing the Purpose handout
- Examine 5 newspaper and magazine articles either online or in print. Is the story something the audience wants to know, needs to know, or both? Explain. (see handout below)

Assessment:

- Entrance Slip
- Analyzing the Purpose handout

DAY 2 – Engagement (storytelling techniques)

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

What types of stories keep you interested? How are they written? Explain.

- Discuss the student responses.
- What can we do as reporters to keep our readers engaged/interested?
2.) **Brief lecture (15 min.)** –

- Define and discuss key terms (p. 200)
  - The Hour Glass
  - The Q & A
  - Story as Experience
  - Being on the Nose
  - Pictures of the Mind
  - The Reveal
  - Narrative
  - Multimedia

3.) **Analyzing the Story Structure (20 min.)** –

- Complete the chart by examining different publications and analyzing the story structure

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Analyzing the Story Structure
- Brainstorming session

**Materials & Resources used:**

- Analyzing the Purpose and Story Structure handout
- Multiple publications to examine and analyze (both online and in print)
# ANALYZING the PURPOSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF ARTICLE &amp; PUBLICATION</th>
<th>IS THE ARTICLE WHAT THE AUDIENCE NEEDS TO KNOW, WANTS TO KNOW, OR BOTH?</th>
<th>EXPLAIN YOUR REASONING</th>
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# ANALYZING the STORY STRUCTURE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NAME OF ARTICLE &amp; PUBLICATION</th>
<th>WHAT STORY STRUCTURE IS IT USING?</th>
<th>IS IT EFFECTIVE? WHY OR WHY NOT? HOW COULD IT BE MORE EFFECTIVE?</th>
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Title: Analyzing Sources & Quotes

Overview and Rationale:

“Every act of news gathering, editing, and writing or speaking the story impinges on morality; ethical decisions must be made along the way...Who are the people giving us information? Which of their words do we use and with what emphasis? How do we go about attributing their words to them?” (Journalism Ethics 192-193).

How journalists select their sources, use their sources and quote their sources can all lead to how a story is “framed.” Therefore, it is essential for journalists to make source decisions deliberately and with ethics in mind.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will learn to analyze source biases and source information.
- Students will how to attribute sources in an accurately revealing manner.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- How should journalists select sources?
- How should journalists quote and attribute sources?
- What should journalists keep in mind when working with sources?
- Key terms – source bias, attribution, anonymous sources

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

DAY 1

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

How do journalists decide who to interview and who not to interview? What do they need to keep in mind? Explain.

- Discuss the student responses.
2.) **Brief lecture (15 min.)** –

- Define and discuss key terms (source bias, attribution, anonymous sources)
- Discuss what journalists should keep in mind when using source information

3.) **Analyzing Sources activity (20 min.)** –

- Get copies of the newspaper and articles
- Using highlighters, find examples of attribution and source use (highlight each using a different color).
- Analyze the story – did the reporter find a diversity of sources? Did they quote anything that was biased? Did they clarify where that bias was coming from? Etc.

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Analyzing Sources activity

**Materials & Resources used:**

- Highlighters
- Multiple publication to examine and analyze (both online and in print)
Title: Truth telling in high school journalism

Overview and Rationale:

In the book *How Good People Make Tough Choices*, Kidder says “ethics is all about truth-telling” (120-121).

The same is true in high school journalism. Students must seek to tell the truth, regardless of the viewpoints of administrators. Media outlets should be a reflection of the community they cover in order to truly be “truthful.” In order for high school publications to then be “truthful,” high school students need to make all content decisions so that the publication is a true and accurate depiction of the high school community.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will discuss the importance of truth telling in the media.
- Students will brainstorm ways to approach the administration about the importance of this truth telling and student decision-making.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- Why should publications seek to tell the truth?
- How can scholastic journalism outlets advocate for their right to “speak the truth” (i.e. make content decisions on their own).
- Key terms – truth (as it relates to media)

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

Is our school publication a “truthful” representation of the school community? Why or why not?

- Discuss student responses.
2.) **Brief lecture (10 min.)** –

- Define and discuss key terms (truth)
- Discuss how the student publication can be an accurate representation of the high school community

3.) **“What we can do to promote truth” –Group Activity (25 min.)** –

- Students will gather in groups of 3-5.
- In groups, students will brainstorm on bulletin board paper ways in which the high school publication can be an accurate representation of the high school community (i.e. represent truth)
- As a whole class, students will discuss the brainstormed lists and create an action plan for creating a “truthful” publication

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Group Activity

**Materials & Resources used:**

- *How Good People Make Tough Choices*– Rushworth Kidder
- Bulletin board paper for group work
Title: Creating an advertising policy

Overview and Rationale:

“The similarities between advertising and news are particularly important when the lines between the activities blur...A set of ethical standards shared between both activities will give contemporary practitioners a better chance at ‘doing the right thing’ in an increasingly competitive media environment” (Media Ethics 69).

What types of advertisements should students print in high school newspapers? What key things should they keep in mind?

It is important for high school editors to make wise decisions when selecting advertising for their publication. In order to make the selection process easier, each year high school staffs should update/create an advertising policy that outlines what types of advertisements make the cut.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will discuss the impact of advertising on student readers.
- Students will discuss and analyze types of advertisements and decide which ones are suitable for publication.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What types of advertisements are suitable for publication?
- How can student editors make decisions regarding advertisements?
- Key terms – advertisement, policy & responsibility

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (5 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

What are some obvious products we should not publish advertisements for in our publication? Why? Explain.
- Discuss student responses.

2.) **Brief lecture (10 min.)** -

- Define and discuss key terms (responsibility)
- Discuss what types of advertisements should not be included in a student publication
- Create a list of reasons *why* we would not publish these advertisements

3.) **“Advertising Analysis” – Group Activity (10 min.)** -

- Students will gather in groups of 3-5.
- In groups, students will analyze advertisements from different publications (both professional publications and other high school publications) and decide, based on the class discussion, whether those advertisements would be suitable for print in our publication.
- As groups discuss, they will fill out one “Advertising Analysis” chart per group
- As a whole class, students will compare group decisions and discuss.

4.) **Creating the advertising policy** -

- As a class, discuss what should be included in an advertising policy based on the discussion from lecture and the activity.
- Have the editor-in-chief write up the policy based on the class discussion and submit it to the editorial board for approval

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Group Activity

**Materials & Resources used:**

- *Media Ethics*– Phillip Patterson & Lee Wilkins
- A collection of advertisements from various publications
- Copies of the “Advertising Analysis” chart (see below)
### “Advertising Analysis” Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/description of the advertisement</th>
<th>Is it suitable for publication? (in high school)</th>
<th>What publication could it be suitable for? (if any)</th>
<th>Explain your reasoning...</th>
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Title: Using the TARES test for ethical advertising

Overview and Rationale:

The TARES test is a “set of questions that creators of every ad should ask themselves to determine the ethical worthiness of the ad. If the answers are ‘yes,’ the ad passes the test. If the answers to some or all of the questions are ‘no,’ then the creator must justify the ad content decisions” (Media Ethics 72).

Staff editorial boards can use the “TARES Test” to help reach an ethical decision regarding advertising. It is important for students to understand ethical decisions making, even in advertising. Everything included in a publication should meet ethical standards for that publication.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will use the TARES Test to make ethical decisions regarding advertising.
- Students will discuss and analyze types of advertisements to practice using the TARES Test.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- Is this advertisement suitable for publication? Does it meet the standards of the TARES Test?
- If it does not meet all the standards of the TARES Test, is there a justifiable reason to still publish the ad? Can the decision be defended?
- Key terms – TARES Test, Bok’s Model, equity & social responsibility

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (10 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

Explain one more ads that you have seen that you do not consider “socially responsible.” Why are they not so?
- Discuss student responses.

2.) **Brief lecture (15 min.)** –

- Define and discuss key terms (TARES Test & social responsibility)
- Discuss what types of advertisements should not be included in a student publication

3.) **“Applying the TARES TEST” – Group Activity (20 min.)** –

- Students will gather in groups of 3-5.
- In groups, students will analyze advertisements from different publications (both professional publications and other high school publications) and decide, based on the class discussion, whether those advertisements meet the TARES Test standards.
- As groups discuss, they will fill out one “Applying the TARES Test” worksheet per group.
- As a whole class, students will compare group decisions and discuss.

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Group Activity

**Materials & Resources used:**

- *Media Ethics*– Phillip Patterson & Lee Wilkins
- A collection of advertisements from various publications
- Copies of the “Applying the TARES Test” worksheet (see below)
**Applying the TARES Test**

Ask these questions below when deciding whether the advertisement is suitable for publication...

Put a check next to each question that can be answered with **YES**...

**T** – Are the ad claims **TRUTHFUL**? ______

**A** – Is the claim an **AUTHENTIC** one? ______

**R** – Does the ad treat the receiver with **RESPECT**? (check if yes) ______

**E** – Is there **EQUITY** between the sender and the receiver? ______

**S** – Is the ad **SOCIALLY** responsible? ______

*If each question can be answered with YES...the ad passes the TARES Test and IS suitable for publication.

*If one or more questions are NOT answered yes, the ad does not pass the TARES Test and must be analyzed further to determine if it is suitable for publication.

**IF IT DOES NOT PASS THE TARES TEST, BUT IT IS STILL THOUGHT TO BE SUITABLE FOR PUBLICATION, EXPLAIN THE REASONING IN THE SPACE BELOW...**
Title: How ethical decision-making is changing: blogging & social media

Overview and Rationale:

“Disclosure is important. As citizens, we deserve to know if a reporter is actively involved with the issues or people he or she is covering. But after listening to journalists and worried citizens, we conclude that disclosure is not sufficient…it is vital to maintain some personal distance in order to see things clearly and make independent judgments” (130). ~ *The Elements of Journalism* by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel

The problem with getting news through blogs or social media sites is that, as a reader, we are never sure the news is credible, accurate or unbiased. But do students know if the information they are receiving is all of those things? Do they care?

This lesson seeks to make students aware of the issues with blogging and social media. It seeks to make students more informed, more media literate. This knowledge is essential – both in receiving information and in producing it.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will discuss media literacy and what it means for them (both as information receivers and as information producers).
- Students will identify biased information from non-biased information in the media.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is media literacy?
- How can readers distinguish biased material from unbiased material in the media? Why is this important?
- Key terms – bias, credibility, disclosure and loyalties

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:
1.) **Anticipatory set/Lead in (5 min.) –**

**ENTRANCE SLIP** – Students will respond to the following prompt:

Are blogs and social media sites a good source of information? Why or why not? Explain.

- Discuss student responses.

2.) **Brief lecture (15 min.) –**

- Define and discuss key terms (bias, credibility, disclosure and loyalties)
- Discuss the ethical ramifications of blogs and social media

3.) **“Distinguishing between credible information and non-credible information” – Activity (25 min.) –**

- Students will use various forms of publications (print, broadcast and online) to analyze credible, unbiased information.
- They will find 3 print stories, 3 broadcast stories and 3 online stories and analyze them on the basis of the criteria below. Of the online stories, one must be from a news site, one from a news blog and one from social media.
  - Accuracy and verification – is the information true? How do you know?
  - Loyalties and disclosure – is the information unbiased? How do you know?

- Write an essay discussing what you learned through analyzing different types of media.

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- “Distinguishing credible information” Activity
- Essay

**Materials & Resources used:**

- *The Elements of Journalism* by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel
- Essay prompt
Title: Is that language suitable for publication?

Overview and Rationale:

Oftentimes, high school journalists have no problem using cuss words or slang words in their publication. They don’t see them as an issue because “everybody says them.”

This lesson/activity is designed to have students analyze what language is suitable in their publication, and why. It allows students to determine when, where and why questionable language is acceptable and what purpose the language serves in the story.

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will discuss suitable language for publication.
- Students will create a policy for language in their publication.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What is the journalistic purpose or value of the questionable language?
- How can the language be perceived negatively?
- Is that negative perception outweighed by its journalistic purpose/value?
- Is the language even needed or newsworthy?
- Key terms – journalistic purpose

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) *Anticipatory set/Lead in (5 min.)* –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will respond to the following prompt:

Is it ok to publish cuss words in our publication? Why or why not? Explain.

- Discuss student responses.

2.) *Brief lecture (5 min.)* –
• Define and discuss key terms (journalistic purpose)

3.) **Group Activity (15 min.)** –

• Students will gather in small groups and create a list of words they think are acceptable or not acceptable to publish. Each group should create a chart with 3 columns (1 – words that are always ok to publish, 2 – words that are sometimes ok to publish, 3 – words that are never ok to publish)

4.) **Whole Class Activity (20 min.)** –

• Students will now brainstorm as a class words that are acceptable to print and words that are not. They will also discuss additional items for the policy (including when it is acceptable to publish cuss/slang words and why OR why they will not publish cuss/clang words and why).

**Assessment:**

• Entrance Slip
• Group Activity
• Whole Class Activity

**Materials & Resources used:**

• Paper for group work (used to create chart)
• Publication policy
Title: Enhancing Ethical Fitness

Overview and Rationale:

In the book *How Good People Make Tough Choices*, Kidder discusses the importance of enhancing what he class “ethical fitness.”

“What’s needed is a capacity to recognize the nature of moral challenges and respond with a well-tuned conscience, a lively perception of the difference between right and wrong, and an ability to choose the right and live by it. What’s needed is *ethical fitness*” (48).

Training students to have a “well-tuned conscience” can be a challenge. It takes more than “teaching” ethics, it takes practicing it – repeatedly, in order for students to develop the conscience Kidder discusses here. This lesson examines one way to enhance that ethical fitness, with an activity titled “Ethics Fridays.”

Goals for Understanding:

- Students will practice making ethical decisions through an ethical decision-making activity.

Essential Questions & Key Terms:

- What decision is the most ethical one to make?
- What is influencing this decision?
- Key terms – ethical fitness

Overview and Timeline (one 45 min. class period – every Friday):

Step-By-Step Procedures:

1.) Anticipatory set/Lead in (5 min.) –

ENTRANCE SLIP – Students will view or read the ethical scenario for the day*:

After viewing or reading the ethical scenario, answer the following question – do we print this? Why or why not? (this should be your first gut reaction)

- Discuss student responses.
*These scenarios should be created at the discretion of the instructor. Each Friday, instructors should select a different scenario. These can be fictional or something from current events (the latter is preferable). Each week, students will examine an ethical scenario in order to enhance their “ethical fitness.”

2.) **Small group discussion (20 min.)** –

- Within the small group, use on of the provided “Ethical Decision Making Models” to examine the ethical scenario further.
- Reach a final decision as a group and provide support for why that decision was made.

3.) **Whole class discussion (20 min.)** –

- Students will now discuss the situation as a whole class and reach a final decision.
- If a final decision cannot be made by the entire class, students will then gather in groups based on final decision and write out dissenting opinions with support and explanation.

**Assessment:**

- Entrance Slip
- Group discussion
- Class discussion

**Materials & Resources used:**

- *How Good People Make Tough Choices*– Rushworth Kidder
- Copies of the “Ethical Decision Making Models" for each group